



Is There Truly a "Mystery of Faith," as Catholic Priest Say?

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In the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church, the phrase *"This is the mystery of faith"* is often recited during the Eucharistic celebration. This statement signifies the Church's belief in the profound and sacred mysteries surrounding the transformation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. However, this raises a crucial question: Is the faith truly a mystery, or has God revealed all that we need to know through Scripture? Moreover, does the Bible support the idea that the bread and wine used in Communion literally become the body and blood of Christ, or is their significance symbolic, intended for remembrance?

To address this, it is essential to understand the biblical perspective on mysteries and revelation. The Bible indeed speaks of mysteries, but not in the sense of secrets that are permanently hidden. Rather, a biblical mystery refers to something that was once hidden but has now been revealed to God's people. For example, in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul speaks of the *"mystery"* of Christ, which was hidden for ages but is now made known ([Colossians 1:26-27](#)). He explains that this mystery is Christ in us, the hope of glory. What was once obscure or veiled has been brought into the light through Jesus Christ.

The Mystery of God Becoming Flesh

The incarnation of Jesus Christ is indeed one of the profound mysteries of the Christian faith. The Bible reveals that Jesus, the Son of God, took on human flesh, a concept that is central to the Christian understanding of God's plan of salvation. In [John 1:14](#), it is written, *"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."* This is a mystery in the sense that it was previously hidden in God's plan but was fully revealed through Christ's coming. The incarnation demonstrates God's deep love for humanity and His willingness to enter into human history to redeem us.

The Apostle Paul also speaks of the mystery of godliness: *"Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory"* ([1 Timothy 3:16](#)). This verse encapsulates the core of Christian faith—the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. While the depth of this mystery is profound, it is not a secret kept from believers. It is a revealed truth meant to be embraced and proclaimed.

The Eucharist: Symbolic Remembrance, Not Literal Transformation

When discussing the Eucharist, or Communion, it is essential to return to what Scripture says about this practice. During the Last Supper, Jesus instituted the practice of Communion as a way for His followers to remember His sacrifice. In [Luke 22:19-20](#), Jesus says, *"And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.'"*

The key phrase here is *"do this in remembrance of me."* Jesus commanded His followers to remember His sacrificial death through the symbols of bread and wine. These elements serve as powerful reminders of His broken body and shed blood, but they are not literally transformed into His body and blood, as Catholic priests say. The bread remains bread, and the wine remains wine; their significance lies in what they represent—the atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Further evidence that the Eucharist is symbolic can be found in [1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#), where Paul recounts the words of Jesus and emphasizes the memorial aspect of the Lord's Supper: *"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."* Paul does not suggest that the elements change in substance; rather, he underscores the importance of proclaiming Christ's death and remembering His sacrifice.

Additionally, Jesus' teaching in John 6 is often cited to support the literal interpretation of the Eucharist. However, it is crucial to understand the context. In [John 6:53-56](#), Jesus says, *"Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink."* While these verses seem to suggest a literal understanding, Jesus later clarifies that His words are spiritual, not literal: *"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life"* ([John 6:63](#)). Jesus is speaking metaphorically, emphasizing the importance of spiritually partaking in Him through faith, rather than suggesting a literal consumption of His flesh and blood.

In the New Testament, this revelation reaches its fullness in Jesus Christ, who is described as *"the Word became flesh and dwelt among us"* ([John 1:14](#)). Jesus came to reveal the Father to us and to make known the way of salvation. He declared, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"* ([John 14:6](#)). This is not a hidden or mysterious statement but a clear and direct revelation of the path to eternal life.

Furthermore, the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers is to guide them into all truth ([John 16:13](#)). The Holy Spirit illuminates the Scriptures and helps us understand God's will and His ways. The Spirit's work is not to keep us in the dark but to bring clarity and understanding.

[2 Timothy 3:16-17](#) makes it clear that Scripture contains all that is necessary for a believer to be fully equipped for life and godliness. There is nothing essential to faith and salvation that has been withheld or kept as a mystery. While the depth of God's wisdom is indeed profound—*"Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments, and His paths beyond tracing out!"* ([Romans 11:33](#))—it is crucial to recognize that God has revealed everything we need to know for our salvation and life in Him. What may remain beyond our full comprehension is the infinite nature of God Himself, but this does not mean that God's will and plan for humanity remain hidden.

Conclusion

The phrase *"This is the mystery of faith"* should be understood as an expression of the profound truths of Christianity, particularly the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. However, the Bible reveals these truths to us and invites us to understand and embrace them. While the depth of God's wisdom is indeed great, He has not left us in the dark. Through Scripture, God has revealed all that is necessary for our salvation and spiritual life.

Regarding the Eucharist, Scripture teaches that it is a symbolic act of remembrance. The bread and wine used in Communion are not literally transformed into the body and blood of Christ. Instead, they serve as tangible reminders of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. As believers, we are called to remember Jesus' death, proclaim His resurrection, and look forward to His return, all while understanding that God has revealed these truths for our edification and salvation.

Therefore, when a priest declares, *"This is the mystery of faith,"* it should inspire us not to remain in ignorance but to delve deeper into Scripture. We are to seek understanding, guided by the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth ([John 16:13](#)). The truths of the faith, once hidden, have now been revealed, and they are meant to be understood, embraced, and lived out by all who follow Christ.

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